

# BICENTENNIAL

1776

1976

## POST SCRIPT

December, 1976

SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUE

Comstock Community Newsletter



Jim Bell, Grand Marshall

Pictures were taken by several persons:

Fred McLinden  
Harry Lisk  
Larry French  
Gertrude Slater  
Jim Bell



Tom and Louise Anson lead a parade of old cars in their 1930 Chevrolet Coupe



Guiding himself in for a landing is an Austin Lake skydiver

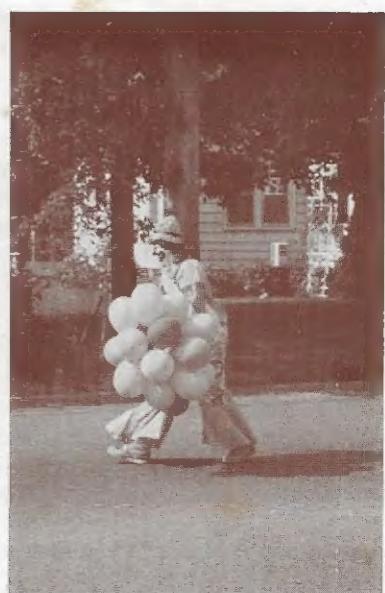


Bicentennial King Roy Carpenter and Queen Beth Bunting



Here they come!!!

The Bicentennial celebration not only renewed our pride in our American heritage, but served to bring people together locally in a community-wide effort. The Committee apologizes for any omissions we may have made in the credits. It was unintentional



"The Town Clown"

This supplemental issue of the Comstock Community Newsletter represents the final project of the Comstock Township Bicentennial Committee. We are hopeful that you will place this issue with your copy of the Comstock History Booklet. For that purpose, we have tried to keep it uniform with the booklet.

## BICENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES RECALLED

by Joe Van Bruggen

The Township Bicentennial Committee was formulated June 16, 1975 by action of the Comstock Township Board. The Board agreed the Committee would be open to anyone who wished to join simply by their attendance at meetings and participation in activities. The Supervisor submitted a list of projects he envisioned could be undertaken in our Township to commemorate our Nation's 200th Birthday, most of which were fully realized such as: compiling township's history, beautification of the community, stimulation of pride in our community, bicentennial celebration and community-wide planting of trees.

*The first project undertaken was primarily handled by the Township Board. That was the purchasing of road-side signs identifying the Township. At that time, the board considered buying signs with the Bicentennial logo in the upper right-hand corner which could be removed after the Bicentennial Year of 1976, leaving the establishment date of the Township in its place. However, it was found that for any sign company to affix or manufacture a Bicentennial logo, the company would have to spend several thousand dollars for a license fee for the right of printing such a logo due to its being copyrighted by the United States Bicentennial Commission! The board decided to purchase the signs with just the establishment date.*

The Bicentennial Committee undertook many different projects for the celebration including three different tree-planting projects (see article by Fred McLinden). Probably the most time consuming project undertaken was the Comstock History Booklet, an account of the development of various aspects of Comstock Township since the early 1800's.

From a discussion in the committee of sponsoring a firework display or a parade, the day-long Bicentennial celebration which took place Saturday, June 12, 1976 evolved including many different events and activities. There was the biggest and best parade Comstock has ever seen! Entertainment (musical) was provided all day as well as games, sky divers, a "Jaws of Life" demonstration by Comstock firemen, a ride in a hot air balloon was raffled off, chicken dinner served all day plus many other good things to eat and the day was climaxed by a fireworks display at dusk.

Also held at the Comstock High School in conjunction with the Bicentennial celebration was the annual Art Show sponsored by the Comstock Township Parks and Recreation Board. The Northeast Middle School players performed in the auditorium also in the afternoon.

As a final project of the Bicentennial Committee, this supplementary newsletter was issued to be placed with your copy of the Comstock Historical Booklet. If you do not have a booklet, there are still a few copies available. Phone 381-2360 for further information.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* All the pictures with the exception of the Park Board, were  
\* taken on June 12, 1976, at the Bicentennial Celebration.  
\*\*\*\*\*

## The Story of Comstock Township's Bicentennial Tree Planting Program

by Fred McLinden

The planting of trees to mark celebrations has been a gratifying task for many communities. This was particularly true during the recent Bicentennial program. The committee representing Comstock Township embarked on an ambitious plan to involve all of its residents in planting trees.

First of all it was decided to offer blooming size Flowering Crabapple trees to all residents of the Township at cost. Such trees were placed in special containers ready for planting. Over 100 orders were received for the trees and they were delivered by local volunteers on April 17.

On Arbor Day in late April, a large native Michigan tree, the Scarlet Oak, was planted in the northwest part of Cooper Park on N. 26th Street. A large rock with a suitable plaque honors the planting of this symbolic tree to signify Comstock Township's part in the Bicentennial Year celebration. Many local citizens were present to attend the ceremonies which were conducted by James Bell, Chairman, Comstock Township Bicentennial Committee.

The climax of the community tree planting program came on April 20 when some 56 shade and ornamental trees were planted throughout the central area of the Township according to a plan very graciously drawn up by Mr. John Light, Light's Tree Company. A planting bee headed by Don and Dave Balkema started off the day-long activity. The Balkema's, Mr. Bob Newman and Carleton Equipment Company furnished power equipment. Helping out on the shovel end of the work detail were Joe VanBruggen, Russell Wood, Randy Doud, James Bell, Jim Slater and Fred McLinden. Jim Meints and Larry French manned the old fire truck and watered each tree as it was planted.

Trees planted included the following: Sugar Maple, Red Oak, Red Sunset Maple, Basswood, London Plane Tree, Sargent Cherry, Bradford Pear, Douglas Fir, Norway Maple, Green Ash, Mountain Ash, VanEseltine Crabapple, Snowdrift Crabapple and Indian Magic Crabapple.

The tree planting program was a repeat of a project that took place in Comstock Township for the Nation's 100th Birthday. Some of those trees are still standing. Those who helped in this year's project can only hope that the beauty of these trees will help keep alive the spirit of cooperation which prevailed during Comstock's Bicentennial.



Annual Art Fair in conjunction with Bicentennial Celebration at Comstock High School

## COMSTOCK'S PROGRESS SINCE 1950

Shortly after World War II, the young men of Comstock were returning home to take their place in the civilian world. Comstock was headed for many changes.

It was strictly home-town atmosphere and our governing body was a five-man board consisting of a supervisor, treasurer, clerk and two trustees. In the ensuing years it has become a seven-man board with two additional trustees. It has become necessary because of the rapid growth of our township to add many new governing boards to handle the business of our township. There is a Zoning Board, Board of Review, Library Board, Park Board, etc. In 1951, the township government and fire department moved into the first township owned building. Since that time, we've added the new Township Hall, Library Building and North Fire Station.

Our school system has progressed from one central location on 26th Street to eight building locations as widespread as Green Meadows School and Gull Road School.

Twenty-five years ago the Rex Paper Mill was the largest and most important industry in our township. Now it is an empty shell of a building that is only partially used and not by the paper industry. The other large industry in Comstock at that time was the celery industry but that, too, has virtually disappeared to be replaced by the bedding plant industry, and even that is no longer just in the mucklands.

Comstock has been fortunate in having much industrial growth in the township, starting with New York Air Brake (now Hydrex). There are many others including General Motors, Buck Tool, Aeromotive, and Burroughs Mfg.

Many commercial businesses have entered the township. Among them are Harry W. Taylor Plumbing, Aspen Displays, Balkema Sand and Gravel, Richards Plumbing, Jacklin Steel Supply Company, Bemis and Son, etc.

In 1950 the businesses in Comstock consisted mostly of Poortenga and Slager Lumber Company, Allen's Drugs, Reed's Market, Hilgeman's, Barret's Market, the Market Basket, and numerous gas stations, several taverns and the Beer Store. Only a few of those still remain. There have been many changes and in recent years we have added two large shopping centers on Gull Road as well as a cafeteria-restaurant, Schensul's on Sprinkle Road. We have also added three different banks in four locations. We have a large insurance agency, Burnham and Flower, Breneman's Medical Clinic has been a welcome addition to the township also. Probably the latest acquisitions are the Evans Ford Agency on the corner of 35th Street and Michigan Avenue and Bond Supply Company on Miller Road.

Comstock Post Office made it's last move in those years to it's own permanent building, the present location on Kings Highway.

There have been many improvements in the roads of Comstock Township in the last twenty-five years, the most important being on River Street, Comstock Avenue and 26th Street, and of course, the extension of Sprinkle Road on the edge of the township.

We must not forget that Comstock has added much new street lighting, a sewage system, and many water districts.

The churches have expanded from three or four to many times that number.

Comstock Township has truly been much more blessed than have many townships.

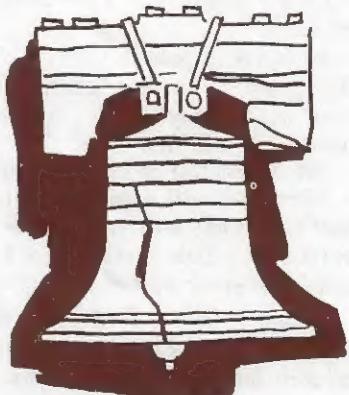
Chub and Karla Reed



Ready for take-off! Lyle Lumbard and Chub Reed were the "lucky?????" winners in the hot-air balloon ride!

The following persons served on the 1976 Bicentennial Committee from Comstock Township. Some gave more time than others, but all contributed something to the celebration of our Nation's 200th Birthday!

James Bell, Ch'm.  
Glenn Baughan  
Carl L. Betz  
Mary Jo Breneman  
Charles Chrisman  
Donna Chrisman  
Virginia Churchill  
Robert B. Crummel  
Nancy Deal  
Maude W. Ellwood  
Daniel Kane  
Bertha Lisk  
Constance Osorno  
Felix Osorno  
C. Dale Reed  
Karla Reed  
Joseph Van Bruggen  
Joyce Van Bruggen  
Olive Vose  
Eleanor Westrate  
Russell Wood  
Bruce Mason  
Fred McLinden  
Jim Van Bochove  
Alice Weber  
Robert Shane  
Chris Wenke  
Carol Doud  
Ray Slager  
Margaret Bell  
Don Balkema  
Dr. Dale Case



Richland Fire Department  
"Rag-time Music"

**COMSTOCK'S NEWSLETTER**  
"How It Started"

by Fred McLinden

Comstock's first attempt at a community newspaper began November 20, 1970 with the publication of THE COMSTOCK CITIZEN. A product of Humble Hills Press, Gale Akins, a Comstock resident, struggled valiantly to keep his paper alive. However, the financial burden proved too great and the CITIZEN closed down in December, 1970.

Long before the CITIZEN appeared there was a definite feeling that a news "vacuum" existed in the Comstock Township area. With this in mind, the writer met with Robert Morris, Township Supervisor, during the winter of 1970-71 and suggested that a NEWSLETTER be printed monthly informing Comstock residents of news and information relative to the Township. Mr. Morris seemed pleased with the suggestion and asked that petitions be circulated throughout the Township. A Newsletter Committee was formed at this time and included the following persons: James Bell, Robert Crummel, S. K. Harrington, Alfred Madden, C. Dale Reed, Chris Wenke and Robert Wheelright. McLinden served as chairman.

After sufficient petitions were received favoring the printing of the Newsletter, final costs were secured and a formal presentation was made at the April 3, 1971 Annual Meeting. McLinden represented the Committee at that meeting. The April 4th issue of the Kalamazoo Gazette carried a story on the proposed Newsletter and quoted Robert Morris as saying: "Such a Newsletter would be useful in explaining what's happening in Comstock in more detail than the Gazette could be expected to, referring to such things as the activities of the lesser-known Township Boards." At the time, Trustee Robert Dunham was also quoted as saying: "If people don't come to the Board Meetings, I think the Boards may have to go to the people. We don't get a lot of people (at the meetings) unless there's a roaring issue. I think the Newsletter has merit."

Approval to publish the Newsletter was made by the Township Board at its next meeting. Publication of Vol. I, No. 1 came out in May, 1971. Approximately 3,000 copies were printed for the first issue.

The Newsletter continues to be published once a month and is delivered to all box holders in the Township. The Supervisor's Report, written by Joe VanBruggen, is a monthly feature. C. Dale Reed offers his popular feature, variously called, "History of Comstock," and "Memories". Comstock Community Center News, one of the larger features, is ably written by Dan Kane, Director of the Center. Other regular features include Library News, written by Maris Owens, Librarian, or one of her staff; Fire Dept. statistics, VFW News. A new feature listing Building Permits has been added.

Other features include Comstock Community Calendar, news from the Comstock Post Office, notices of various Township Board meetings and features passed along to the Newsletter by the Comstock Public Schools. Letters from readers are always welcome and will be published as space permits. Township Park News and a new feature "Comstock Citizen of the Month" are written by McLinden.

Nancy Deal ably gathers all news material and photos and is responsible for the makeup of each issue. Mrs. Deal is the only salaried person on the Newsletter staff. Both Reed and McLinden are the "old timers" on the Newsletter staff, having served from the beginning.

In order to effect a saving in postal rates, the name of the Newsletter was changed with the September, 1976, issue. It is now known as the COMSTOCK COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER.



Park Commission  
May 24, 1975  
L to R: Hy Dunfield, Phillip Gray, Pearl Vasher, S. K. Harrington, Argyle Stevens, Jr., and Russell Wood



Comstock 1776  
Bicentennial Committee float



DECA Club, High School  
(1st place float)



Miss Maude Ellwood, a moving force behind the Bicentennial Committee.

The Comstock Township Bicentennial sponsored several contests in conjunction with the celebration on June 12, 1976. First there was a poster contest with a winner in two divisions--Junior and Senior. The Senior winner was Miss Diane Brugh and the Junior winner, Miss Nancy Harris. Each winner received a \$25 savings bond. All the posters which were submitted were used to advertise the Bicentennial celebration throughout Comstock Township.

The day of the parade, Mrs. Jill Engle, Mrs. Bertha Lisk and Mr. Dick Verdon were judges for floats and decorated bicycles. Following are the results of those contests.

*Floats:*

1. DECA Club, Comstock High School
2. Calvinettes
3. Church of Christ

*Bicycles:*

1. Perri Smeltzer
2. Bill Sternaman
3. Tracey Dunfield
4. Brian Poortenga

Thank you all for participating!



Mary Jo Breneman, Vice Chairman, Bicentennial Committee. Time out from a very busy day for lunch.

## INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL and RESIDENTIAL

### DEVELOPMENT

By Joe Van Bruggen

Comstock Township, in a twelve year period of time, has experienced a tremendous change from a township with a rural flavor to one that is diversified with a steady growth in both industrial, commercial, and residential development. General Motors opened their Comstock Township stamping plant in October of 1965, and other major industries followed into the area. Bemis and Son, Inc. makers of highway signs and barricading material; Newhouse Printers; Aero-Motive Inc., makers of industrial reels and related items; Wheeler-Blaney Co., mechanical contractors; Industrial Graphics; P. M. K. Enterprises; and the newest addition, Bond Supply Co. for a total valuation of over 45 million dollars in a mile and a half square area.

In about 1970, commercial interest began to develop in the northwest corner of Comstock Township. Goodwill, Inc., a real estate arm of Meijers, took option on the sixty acre Ellis Farm at the corner of North 26th Street and Gull Road, but before any development could take place the property needed to be rezoned. This zoning matter turned out to be one of the most controversial that perhaps Comstock Township had ever seen. About 400 residents appeared at a public hearing on the matter in the Comstock High School cafeteria September 10, 1970. Those attending were about equally divided for and against rezoning.

Ultimately, a new zoning classification was adopted July 20, 1970, known as C-2 Shopping Center District with a highly restricted text. C-2 zoning required site plan review by the Comstock Zoning Board of Appeals, thus assuring protection for adjoining property owners and the surrounding neighborhood. The Township Board approved C-2 zoning for the Ellis Farm on a split decision on December 7, 1970. The East Towne Mall property was also rezoned to C-2 June 18, 1973, to allow for the development of the mall.

Sewer and water were extended to Gull Road East Towne Mall and Meijer sites by the respective developers, thus bringing these utilities within reach of township residents in the area if they desire these services.

It was in late 1969 and 1970 that Comstock Township began to see the development of major sewer and water lines under the guidance of the Township Supervisor, the late Robert Morris, and these programs of utility expansion are still carried on today. Comstock Township has nine miles of major trunk line sewers, a sewer lift station to serve the future needs of the southeast section of the township, and 99,034 feet of water mains are laid along township streets with more water main projects pending.

Plat development that was dormant in the township for a number of years has also picked up in the past five years. Jack Smith's Wildwood Hills Plat has seen expansion; Wendzel's Home Builders developed a large plat in section two of the township on a tract of land between North 33rd and North 35th Street, known as Meadow Wood Hills; and the newest plat is Merry Brook off the 6200 block of East Main, developed by Don Watts.

Comstock Township has been fortunate over the years to have had various boards that were able to work together. This is not to say that all members have seen things eye-to-eye or agreed on every issue, but unlike some other townships in Kalamazoo County, Comstock Board members respect one another's views and ultimately agreements reached were for the good of the township.



VFW Color Guard and U. S. Marine Corps  
Bridge Co., 4th Marine Division Color Guard  
and VFW Color Guard with Glen Baughan, Commander

Dr. Dale E. Case has been working for several years on gathering information concerning Comstock's history. Dr. Case has given us just a sample of some of the information he has. We hope to print others in future editions of the Newsletter.

### RESEARCHING THE COMSTOCK STORY by Dale Edward Case

After several years of researching the Comstock scene, I find a vast reservoir of available village history. Of particular historical importance are the stories that may be read from pictures, maps, biographies, textual material, and notes gained from diaries, interviews, and legal papers. All have something fascinating to say about an earlier, almost forgotten period of time. Although the collecting and analyzing continue, it is now time to bring together the various patterns of activities—the social, economic, and political aspects—that helped to structure a small Michigan town during one block of time (1830 - 1930).

While a working outline was being prepared, numerous questions kept popping up, each one necessitating explanations to be based on thorough checkings. A few, however, continue to be nebulous and difficult to pinpoint. Nevertheless, the detective work has revealed some very interesting observations; for example:

*Was Comstock Manor always maintained as a home after Horace H. Comstock sold it in 1841?*

Yes, with one exception: during his last year as a landlord (1833 - 1895), Patrick Rooney allowed son Jerome to convert the house into "Comstock Hotel". Remodeled were a large ballroom and several upstairs quarters. Planned was a choice cuisine in order to tempt the dining-dancing jet-set of Kalamazoo. On December 17, 1894, with fanfare, young Rooney initiated his program. Imported from the city were Baker's orchestra and two skillful lady caterers. As reported by James L. Montague, it appeared that the guests (by invitation only) thoroughly enjoyed the service and entertainment, at the nominal price of seventy-five cents per couple. This momentous event was designed to kick-off the social season for the affluent young folk of Kalamazoo. As the winter progressed, week-end dining-dancing parties visited the "nine o'clock town" and departed at 1:15 a.m. according to previous arrangements with the Michigan Central. Train No. 7 stopped for a "pick-up" if the hotel could guarantee a fifteen-party westbound group.

By mid-July, 1895, a posted sign appeared on the veranda of "Comstock Hotel". Simply stated, "Closed", the notice announced the end of a Rooney dream; it also ended the Rooney's stay in the village as mortgage-holders pressed for a show-down with Patrick Rooney. Five years later and after months of title clearance, the oldest house in Comstock and its large lot became the possessions of Kalamazoo printer, Charles H. Barnes (March 14, 1900). Thus, Brookside Park came into existence.

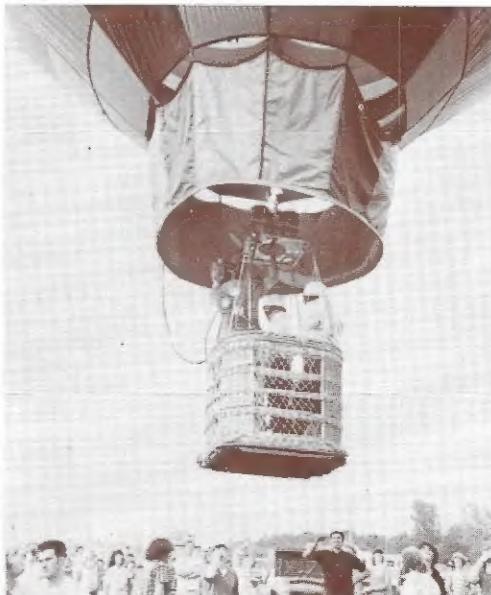
(continued next column)

(continued)

*How should we visualize the village between 1830-1840?*

Try to step over the boundary that separates our time-slot from the earlier period. Visualize a somewhat primeval landscape of hardwood timber and prairie grasses, with occasional clearings for house and field. Alter your thinking, for instance: 1. Forget East Michigan Avenue (M96) as you see it today. Consider a narrow, rutted, stump-lined roadbed and badly cleared sidings. Such was the early view of the Territorial Road then known as the Washtenaw Trail. As a former Indian trail it extended from Ann Arbor through the center of the recently surveyed Comstock Township (leaving it at the Eli Anderson properties) and continuing through Bronson and on to St. Joseph on Lake Michigan. 2. Remove from your vision the railroad bed; the MCRR would not reach Comstock until after February 1, 1846, and then the surveyors would shave off good portions of bordering lots for the single-track roadbed. 3. Gull Prairie Road (that's 26th) was at best not more than a sandy single-file Indian pathway that followed a slight depression between the small water-bodies on the east and the upland glacial moraine on the west. 4. Small glacial lakes in Section 17 (Comstock Station) were called "millponds" by the New Yorkers. They were all a part of a larger drainage system to the north that includes the well-known Campbell and Lyons Lakes, marshlands, and Comstock Creek. 5. South Comstock was slowly being drained (by Nature), exposing a rich waxy alluvium, the filtered soil of a former glacial lake. It was closely associated with the wide valley of the Kalamazoo River, a former spillway for the early glacial melt-waters. 6. And finally, no excavations had lowered the ground lying between the hilltop burying-ground and the site of the one-room school built by Comstock. Also noticeable would be the rise in elevation as one might move along Gull Prairie Road toward the present site of the Comstock High School. All lands, in general, sloped and thereby drained toward the Kalamazoo River.

It should be noted that there was nothing spectacular or unique about the way of life as experienced by our early predecessors. Predominately rural in character and thought patterns of their life-style were to be found in hundreds of communities throughout southern Michigan during the 19th century. It was a design that seems to have disappeared from the American landscape more than half a century ago; however, while it lasted a permanent imprint was made on our national character.



Up - up and away!

Your Comstock Community Center exists as a place for township citizens to gather to develop meaningful relationships and activities through educational, recreational and social activities. We offer a variety of human care services for your improvement and advancement including:

Transportation - 24 hour advance notice, Mon-Fri  
Counseling - by appointment; both 1-1 and group

Recreation - rollerskating - Tuesday nights; pool  
Day Care - full time, ages 2½ to 6

Clothing Bar - Mon-Fri, old Middle School

Youth Services - groups, youth council - Thurs. even.

Paper Drives - every Tuesday and Thursday

Senior Citizen Lunch - if you're 60+, you qualify!

Information and Referral -

Senior Dances - twice a month

Emergency Assistance -

Well Child Clinics - once a month, 4th Tuesday

Family Planning Clinics - twice a month

Dental Clinic - ages 18-60, by appointment

Health services - Public Health Nurses are available

Outreach Services - matches needs with resources

The staff at the Community Center would appreciate your inquiries or comments, please call 345-8556.

Dan Kane, Director

The Comstock Township Bicentennial celebration took a tremendous amount of dedication, long hours, imagination, talent, money, service, organization, coordination, etc., etc., etc.!

Listed here are those many groups, businesses, individuals and organizations that gave money or services to make the celebration a reality! If your name should be here and is not, please accept our apologies, the omission was unintentional.

Miller Lumber Company

Dunham Electric

Bemis & Son Inc.

Modern Neon Sign

Comstock Beer

American National Bank

Kalamazoo Medical, P.C.

Upjohn Agr. Div.

Lyons Bait

Michigan National Bank

Krum Pump Company

ISB

Newhouse Printers

Kalamazoo Industries

Swap Shop

Joe VanBruggen

June Taft, Realtor

Kandler Tool

Industrial Pallet

Morren's Poultry

Arends Equipment

Wheeler-Blaney

Charles Prange Co.

Lyons Bait Shop

Kessler's

Meijers Inc.

Collison's

John Light

Aspen Displays

Carleton Equipment

Koenig Trucking

Argus

Beach Products

Dog and Suds

A & P

Griffith Dairy

Chipman's Landscape Forms

Schostak Bros. Inc.

Allen Drug

Dotty's

Lakeshore Machinery

Bell's Greenhouse

Comstock Jaycees

Comstock Lions

Comstock High School

Bicentennial Committee

Comstock Park and Recreation Board

Comstock Township Board

Comstock Twp. Bicentennial Comm.

Comstock Township Firemen

Kal. County Sheriff's Dept.

Darrell Fieselman

Light's Tree Co.

Santman Plumbing

Comstock Public Schools

Following is a list of persons participating in the June 12, 1976, Comstock Township Bicentennial Parade.

There were so many groups and persons who showed up at the last minute that we were unaware of, that we have undoubtedly overlooked someone--for that, we apologize! And to all of you, thanks for making this the best parade in Comstock's history!

James Bell, Grand Marshall (Ch'm., Bicent. Comm.)

Comstock High School band students

Comstock Northeast Middle School band with

Mr. Henry Kulesa, Band Director

Marine Corps Reserve Color Guard

VFW Post 6252 and Auxiliary

Other VFW Posts and the "Cooties"

Julius Bonselaar (pony drawn calliope)

Pony Club members

Michigan Civil War Regiment

Pack 221

Girl Scout Troops 653, 657, 600 and 620

Brownie Troops 664 and 674

The Kalamazoo Vette Club

Comstock Church of Christ (float)

Comstock Twp. Bicentennial Committee (float)

Comstock Township Fire Departments

DECA Club, Comstock High School, float

Mr. and Mrs. Jay Kameran (horse and buggy)

Kalamazoo Antique Car Club, Dave Hybel Chairman

Jim Downs and the Vette Center

D. McConney and Kalamazoo Valley Street Rods

King and Queen

Roy Carpenter and Beth Bunting

Jimmie Ray, Charlee Bee and

T-R, Clowns

Calvinettes (float)

Don Balkema and family

Bill Chalker and the Richland Fire Department's

"rag-time" band

Walter Lucas (oil-pull tractor)

Thanks to Kirklin's and Lou Don Farms for horses used in the parade

Sweet Americans (baton)

Many local children who rode their decorated bicycles

A big thanks to Joe Van Bruggen and Russ Wood for organizing the parade itself and putting it "on the road!"



Northeast Middle School Band

The following persons participated in the Bicentennial Celebration Saturday, June 12, 1976.

Comstock Township firemen

Lee and Mary Webster and the

Country Swingers with Ray

Holiday, Marv Martin & Joy Jacox

Austin Lake Sky Divers

Walter Lucas

Dwight Phillips

Marion Hiss, County Center

4-H Group

Ethel Ray

Sing Out Kalamazoo

City of Kalamazoo  
(portable stage)

Howard Ewles

Bob Wheelright

Lyle Lumbard

Chub and Karla Reed

JoAnn Lyles

Deb Nagy

Jim Ouding

Jerie Rabbers

Jim Tucker

Mainord Weaver

Henry Balkema

Mrs. Klingaman

Darlene Hunkins

Larry French

Mel Alden

Ron Baker

Doug Brown

Lynn Brown

Comstock Youth Council

of the Comstock Community Center

Charlotte Counter

Millie Coy

Ed and Pat Gasaway

Yvonne Galbreath

Clifford Juday

Dan and Marcia Kane

Jim Kirk

Odessa Lettow

Barry Dopp and Community

Theatre members

Gloria Hoffman

Larry Dopp

Rag-time Classics

"Jim and Tim" entertainers

Youth of Covenant Church

and Rev. Charles Anderson

Mrs. Fran Winegar, Asst. Principal

Northeast Middle School and  
members of Comstock School Board

Tom Rafferty, Pres. and other

Comstock Jaycee members

WAOP Radio Station (mobile unit)

Tarnow Dairy

Darrell Fieselman

Dr. Robert Hamet

Austin Lake Sky Divers

NEMS Drama Group

Annual Arts and Crafts Show

sponsored by Parks and

Recreation Department

Comstock Township



"Headin' West" or is it East? are Bob Nicholson and Karen Wood on Comstock Avenue.

Gene Sanford and Lions Club members

Jim Meints

Sharon Terrill

Tammy Zandt

Judy Morrison

Dr. Dick and Dolores Dorner

Bob and Norma Dunham

Dick and Lois Schipper

Mr. and Mrs. Pete VanderKley

Sue VanderKley

Jim Van Bochove and members of  
Comstock High Bicentennial Committee

Fred and Phyllis McLinden

Joe and Joyce VanBruggen

John and Dorothy Bastin

Gare and Eleanor Westrate

Dale and Nancy Deal

Mary Jo Breneman

Janice Boer

Pete and Beverly Dantone

Al Bunting

Comstock High School custodians

Russ Wood

Anne Morris

Dick Verdon

Maude Ellwood

Charles and Donna Chrisman

Bruce and Virginia Churchill

Harry and Bert Lisk

Jill Engle

Alvin and Jane VanderStik



Mr. and Mrs. Jay Kamerman



Mr. and Mrs. Julius Bonselaar and calliope



Comstock's Fire Departments

I am working with this committee and they have asked me to see if the libraries in Kalamazoo County would be willing to help in their project by means of being a focal point for receiving information on 100 year old homes and by giving any information that we have on researching old homes. They would also like to know of any 100 year old citizens in your community, so that they may be honored on a special occasion in 1976. That information may be given to me and I will contact the person in charge. Thank you.

Faye Clark, McKay Library, Augusta.

Comstock

October 28, 1975

HERITAGE HOMES OF KALAMAZOO COUNTY COMMITTEE

Greetings:

Some time ago, you showed an interest in the history and condition of Kalamazoo County's stock of homes 100 or more years old. You further expressed your concern by responding to Bob Lacey's idea for a do-it-yourself recognition program of such homes during our country's Bicentennial Celebrations in 1976.

Between then and now, however, I bet that you have been wondering what happened to Bob's idea and just what, if anything, will be put together to facilitate such an effort.

Although all of you have not been contacted to date, progress has not been stymied. Here's what has been happening:

Bob Lacey teamed up with the Kalamazoo Jaycees and together a basic plan of approach was developed.

March, 1975 - Letter sent to home owners that responded to Bob's idea.

May - July, 1975 - A steering committee was established to develop the dynamics of the plan and to submit a proposal to the Kalamazoo County Bicentennial Committee.

September, 1975 - Proposal endorsed by the Bicentennial Committee.

September, 1975 - Steering committee meets to review plan, prepare committees, publicity, a model recognition plaque and plan a large meeting to involve the public in this plan.

October, 1975 - This letter is prepared and mailed to interested parties.

November 21, 1975 - General public meeting held, Bicentennial plan presented, committees established, recognition plaque presented.

December, 1975 - July, 1976 - Plan put into operation.

With this letter, you will find a copy of the proposal as submitted to the Bicentennial Committee. This proposal spells out the goals of this organization and our plans of attack.

Please review this plan and begin thinking about how you could join a committee and get involved.

Heritage Homes of Kalamazoo County Committee  
October 28, 1975  
Page 2

The title of our organization is "Heritage Homes of Kalamazoo County." We feel Heritage Homes is an appropriate title for our group and accentuates the proper role of such homes in our county's history.

On Friday, November 21, 1975, we are planning the first of our general membership meetings. Dr. Peter Schmitt will be our guest speaker. In addition, we will review the plan and nature of Heritage Homes.

This meeting will be held in the Ladies Library Association's Building located at 333 South Park Street, Kalamazoo. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Due to the fact that the meeting room holds only 100 people, we make two requests:

1. Attendance be restricted to Heritage Home owners and boosters.
2. Advance notification of your attendance be received.

We hope that this news re-charges your spirit for this kind of endeavor. We also hope that you will make contact with our organization in the near future and get involved.

If you plan on attending the November 21st meeting, please call 343-2043 and ask for Carol Rooks.

Yours truly,

*Chuck Bidleman*

Chuck Bidleman

Member of Steering Committee

Heritage Homes of Kalamazoo County

CB:kb

Enclosure

Heritage homes are those homes which are at least 100 years old. It is estimated that there are 500 heritage homes in Kalamazoo County.

Goals of Bi-Centennial Project:

1. to stimulate owners to recognize and research the 500 heritage homes in Kalamazoo county.
2. to authenticate the findings of researchers.
3. to promote a single plaque to be used for recognition.
4. to hold a special event in 1976 to spotlite recognized homes.

(A)

I. Emphasis of Activity

The event will be held during 1976.

-a highlight day or days will be held.

-spiratic events prior and following the event will be held.

(B)

-this event will be indegenous to Kalamazoo county because the homes to be honored we all built in Kalamazoo county 100 years ago.

(C)

-the population interests touched will be historical, people-at-large and the Home-owners.

(D)

-this proposed activity will contribute to a greater understanding of our communities heritage because this project will be establishing the history of our heritage, especially that which occured in the creation of our communities homes 100 years or more ago.

(E)

-side effects realized could include:

- a. an enhanced understanding of the history of our community, resulting in a greater respect for such.
- b. historical perspective enriches quality of life.
- c. respect and desire for historical preservation will be generated, resulting in a permanent desire for improvement.

(A) II. Sponsors degree of committment

1. sponsors degree of committment is sufficient to move this project into reality on or about July 4, 1976.
2. most sponsors are centenial home owners, members of historical societies, Bi-Centennial committees, and/or experts relating to the topic of this project.
3. much community support is being realized to date, as the organization grows, even more support will be realized.

4. the feasibility of this project being completed is to date at least 80%. The primary elements necessary are.
  - a. means to research homes
  - b. means to validate resulting research
  - c. means to obtain appropriate recognition plaque
  - d. means to publicize the scope and nature of this project. All elements are being secured.

(B) This project will compliment similar project because.

1. this project can co-ordinate with the public the means to research homes (similar goal of local projects).
2. this project can stimulate the private sectors interest in Heritage homes. (similar goals of related organizations).

III. If charges are assessed it will be for the following.

1. flags could be sold to be flown on recognition day in 1976 to highlight our heritage of homes. If a profit is realized, such will be donated to the civic organization selling the flags. (i.e., boy scouts, possibly).
2. the plaque that will be officially promoted for recognition will be sold at cost to able people to "do-it-themselves". Any "over cost" received will be plowed in to the organization to cover operating expenses.
3. charges at cost will be assessed participants for materials if needed.

Excess funds, if any, will be used to perpetuate this project.

Please  
save for  
reproduction

Grand Prize  
Logo Contest

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
--COMSTOCK (MICH.) --



*Morris  
Alice Weber  
Bobbi Holt  
Mainord Weaver  
Joan Foy  
Audrey Gray  
Evert VanderBerg*

COMSTOCK COMMUNITY BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF  
BICENTENNIAL STEERING COMMITTEE

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
--COMSTOCK (MICH.)

Fifth Meeting - April 29, 1975  
7:00 P.M.  
Gull Road Elementary

Present: Alice Weber, Chairperson, Paul Harris, Annette Courter, Bobbi Holt, Mainord Weaver, Joan Foy, Audrey Gray, and the new community member Mr. Evert VanderBerg.

Absent: Bob Shane, Mike Stripp, Hazel Smith

Summary of major goals set up by the committee for the 1974-75 school year in preparation for the Bicentennial school year 1975-76.

Building Bicentennial Committees have tentatively signed up for a month next year in which all their activities and projects pertaining to the Bicentennial observance will be consummated. The specific planning will be done within each building by the committee consisting of building chairmen, principal, students, and parents. Tentative programs will be drawn up for the June 5, 1975 meeting at the Comstock High School. This meeting will be hosted by the high school Bicentennial Committee members.

It was suggested that our Steering Committee members might take part in advertising the upcoming year by participating with the Art Group at the Arts and Crafts Festival being held in Merrill Park in May.

The rental of National Geographic Bicentennial and Colonial Films was approved with the condition we try to have the rental used as part of the purchase price if we decide we want and can buy them for the Comstock School AV collection. This would be one of the major projects of ongoing value.

A budget of between \$800 to \$1,000 was roughly drawn for the next year. This would include systemwide prizes, helping with matching funds for building projects, travel and conference money for members of the steering committee, printing and supplies fund and educational materials systemwide.

Joan Foy offered to make a list of suggestions for Bicentennial Observances and distribute to the building committees.

Bob Shane couldn't attend so there was no report on progress of the Art sponsored contest to design and select a Bicentennial logo for Comstock.

An article summarizing the committee's progress this year was written and presented to Dr. Halle for inclusion in the May Comstock Communicator.

Thanks to Jim VanBochove and committee for the fine work they did in organizing and completing the Slogan Contest was presented in spite of his absence. The grand prize slogan, "PRESERVE-RESTORE-REMEMBER" was the winner. Jerry Foy, Central Middle, received his medallion at the April Board of Education meeting.

Another special thanks was extended to Cindy Bittle for designing a certificate which can be used for all Bicentennial contests and presented to each entrant.

Annette Courter presented the information about high school Bicentennial Activities in the absence of the chairman, Jim VanBochoven. The Ben Franklin Kite Flying Contest was postponed April 19 because of the weather. It was rescheduled for May 3 and prizes donated by the American National Bank and procured by Jim will be used.

A series of announcements started on April 18 at the high school. They are entitled 200 Years Ago Today and will run the rest of the year.

The official ARBA Flag has been ordered by the high school group and will be presented to the school.

Ethnic oriented names for food was developed and will be presented to Mrs. Metcalfe in preparing her menus -- if she wishes to use them. Commercial Bicentennial placemats are being used in one restaurant in Comstock and it was felt the development of historical mats would be a good project for various schools to pursue. The Heritage Hill Home tour in Grand Rapids has been cancelled.

The high school committee for historical bike trails has decided to let another group work on this. The steering committee felt this was a long-range project which they should be directing next year. Mrs. Doud will be contacted to ascertain the information she received from the postoffice telling about the route used in pioneer days. Mr. Harris and Alice Weber will investigate legalities with the Comstock Township Government. Final decisions by the committee on major emphasis for next year were:

1. AV Films purchased to enhance school
2. Historic bike trails brochure to explain historic sites and history
3. Committee to work with Parks' Department in developing a Colonial garden, formal garden with topiary work done by students, herb garden
4. Historical newspaper publications -- perhaps printed at KVISD -- Mike Stripp might direct
5. Achievement of BICENTENNIAL COMMUNITY DESIGNATION
  - a. Planning committees organized
  - b. Submit program of broad-based community events which will leave at least one lasting reminder of the 200th birthday celebration
  - c. Obtain approval from chief executive office of the American Revolution Bicentennial Committee
  - d. Submit application through the State Bicentennial Commission
6. Financial Resources available

*Mari Weber*

COMSTOCK COMMUNITY BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

EMERGENCY MEETING  
May 14, 1975  
GULL ROAD SCHOOL

Present: Alice Weber, Chairperson; Mike Stripp, Ed Vanderberg, Annette Courter, Bob Shane, and Jim VanBochove.

Alice Weber began the meeting by stating that the "emergency" purpose of this meeting was in relation to a Bicentennial Festival she had been thinking about us doing. Everyone was in general agreement that we should go ahead and do it; Mrs. Weber suggested the end of September or beginning of October. The committee then decided that the best day to hold it would be Saturday, October 4. The location was then discussed; for reasons of convenience and safety it was decided not to hold it at Merrill Park, but at the high school. It was then officially accepted that we hold the First Annual Comstock Community Bicentennial Fair on October 4, 1975 at Comstock High School from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Possible activities were then discussed. It was mentioned that the Art Department already has eight booths which they could use in such a setting. It was then decided that each school should sponsor some type of booth or some kind of diversionary activity for the Fair. Different types of booths and activities were then put forth as follows:

- Animal Parades
- Baked Goods - Adele Smith
- Costume Contest - Norma Leach
- Stocks - HS, Gary Jennings
- Previously Owned Treasures
- One Act Plays
- Punch and Judy type shows - HS
- Musket Shooting - HS Bill Shields
- Photo Gallery - Hazel Smith and Bob Shane
- Dunking Chair
- Fife and Drum Corps
- Horse Display and Carriage
- Big Pumpkins and large vegetables judging
- Display of Old Artifacts

These were just some of the possibilities we thought each school could come up with some kind of activity similar to this. It was thought that each school would come up with many more ideas of things to do.

Mr. Vanderberg then mentioned the possibility of making a stew to serve the people who come for a certain price. The committee thought that this was a great idea and Mr. Vanderberg volunteered to head up the effort. He mentioned that he would need some help and it was decided to contact John Costello at NEMS for some students that would be willing to help. Mr. Stripp mentioned that the Home Ec. at the High School could prepare the biscuits for the stew.

The High School Committee represented by Jim VanBochove, accepted the responsibility for providing the necessary entertainment.

Page two

It was thought that each school could present its activity for the Fair at the meeting on June 5 at the High School. With that, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Comstock Community Bicentennial Committee will be held on Thursday, June 5, at the High School Library, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All schools will be represented at this meeting.

Respectively submitted,

Jim VanBochove, Secretary

BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMSTOCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1974-1976

National American Revolution Bicentennial Commission theme concepts:

HERITAGE '76

FESTIVALS U.S.A.

HORIZONS '76

Michigan's Bicentennial is using the same themes. But since the American Revolution was the desire of individuals and towns to effect their own destiny, it was felt all local Bicentennial groups should have the same right to create their own emphasis within these themes.

HERITAGE '76

This theme should reward us with a sense of renewal and confidence after we examine the collective experiences and discover the many facets of our heritage. This includes all historical data and artifacts.

FESTIVALS U.S.A.

Festivals could dramatize the spirit of hospitality and mobility of Americans throughout the years. It could show the variety of ideas, cultural expressions and interests of all our ethnic groups. This could become more important than objects or places since it concerns the people. Emphasis could be to encourage citizens to visit other villages, towns, cities, events and festivals within the U.S.A.

HORIZONS '76

Horizons could be the challenge of looking ahead and speeding up local projects which would advance the quality of life within our own communities. The emphasis here should be on the lasting good which these projects would generate.

BICENTENNIAL

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Submitted by

Veva Abrahamson, Librarian  
Parchment Community Library  
Parchment, Michigan 49004

Bicentennial Oral History Project

1. Membership. The advisory committee of the Bicentennial Committee was appointed by KALS chairperson, Klair Bates. The entire committee is made up of representatives of each library in the system, the person being appointed by each individual library.
  2. Purpose. The main purpose of our committee is to work together in collecting oral history, with each library meeting the needs of its own community. We believe this endeavor will foster growth of a coordinated and cooperative program in oral history throughout our library system.
  3. Equipment
    - a. The tape recorders and auxiliary equipment are the property of the Kalamazoo Area Library System and are on permanent loan to member libraries. The warranty for each recorder is being handled through system headquarters.
    - b. Maintenance and repair, after the warranty expires, will be the responsibility of the individual library.
    - c. The tapes that are recorded become the property of the individual library. All blank tapes are still the property of KALS and are not to be used for other reasons than oral history.
    - d. Each library will receive a maximum of 24 tapes for recording and 24 tapes for duplicate (security) copies. There is a possibility that some libraries won't use this many and these can be shared with those having an active oral history project.
    - e. Extra supply of blank tapes will be held at system headquarters until needed by the libraries.
    - f. The security copy (first copy made from original) will be made by the library holding the original, identified and forwarded to Western Michigan University Archives. An additional copy should be on file at System Headquarters. Funds for the security copy and System copy should be provided from grant funds.
  4. A release form for receiving gifts of material and ownership of tapes should be signed by all participants. Each library should prepare these forms. Also, each library should have policies drawn up on the procedures for handling tapes and material collected.
  5. A master catalog will be compiled of the tapes made. Each library will put information on cards according to a form provided by the committee. The master list will be compiled from the information received.
  6. The following items were selected by the advisory committee to be the next items to purchase.

extension cords  
additional tapes  
cassette holders

## BICENTENNIAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

January 15, 1976

INCOME:	\$5,000.00
---------	------------

## EXPENSES:

Tape recorders	\$2,475.00
Extension cords	38.00
Patching Cords	38.00
Microphones (2)	20.00
Foot pedals	75.00
800 tapes	552.00
Cassette holders	313.00
Workshop - WMU	600.00
Miscellaneous expenses - Veva	<u>24.50</u>
	<u>4,135.50</u>
Balance	854.50

## ABSTRACT

We are submitting a proposal for a Bicentennial Grant in the amount of \$10,425.00, to be used for an Oral History Project.

The participants in the project would be the Kalamazoo Area Library System member libraries. Through staff members and volunteers, interviews with citizens would be taped, thus preserving some of the oral history of our area.

There are seven member libraries and two non member libraries in Kalamazoo County, as well as 3 libraries each in Allegan and Van Buren County which belong to our library system. These are the libraries which would be involved in the Oral History project.

We have divided the total cost in two parts--the largest amount coming the first year for equipment, training and coordinator, and a modest amount for the second year supplies and coordinator.

The services of a coordinator are necessary to assist us in selecting the material which would be valuable to preserve; the method of cataloging and identifying; assisting in research and whatever help the libraries need in carrying out this project.

PROPOSAL

This proposal requests funds for a Bicentennial oral history project to include all of the libraries in the Kalamazoo Area Library System. This system embraces the established libraries in Kalamazoo County, with the exception of Richland and Climax libraries, and includes some libraries in Allegan and VanBuren counties. I do feel, however, the Richland and Climax libraries should be included in this project since both encompass a part of the county we desire to cover.

The Portage and Parchment Community Library have already begun a history project of their own and both would like to participate in this larger effort. The following additional libraries have shown a great deal of enthusiasm, and indicate they would like to begin such a project if they could work with someone to help them get started. Budgets are such that funds are not available for tape recorders or tapes.

These libraries also have indicated interest in this project and have agreed to participate (in alphabetical order):

- Allegan Public Library	Allegan
Climax Public Library	Climax
Comstock Township Library	Comstock
Galesburg Memorial Library	Galesburg
Hartford Public Library	Hartford
Lawton Public Library	Lawton
McKay Library	Augusta
Otsego Public Library	Otsego
Kalamazoo Public Library	Kalamazoo

Paw Paw Public Library	Paw Paw
Charles E. Ransom Library	Pleinwell
Richland Community Library	Richland
Vicksburg Community Library	Vicksburg

For this project we would need to purchase two tape recorders and a supply of tapes for each library. We feel that two tape recorders per library are necessary: (1) to be sure one is available when an interview is scheduled, (2) to ensure the mechanism of at least one tape recorder is in order, (3) to allow more than one person at a time to conduct interviews, (4) for the purpose of copying tapes as a library service, and (5) the tape collection can be available to use even when a recorder is being used for interviews.

In-service training. The Insights Oral History Program at Western Michigan University has agreed to provide a six weeks oral history workshop to be scheduled at the convenience of the participating libraries for a tuition fee of \$45.00 per participant. This would be for one representative from each library, who could, in turn, train others in the interviewing techniques.

Xerox. The oral history project may well turn up related valuable manuscript material in local history. It would be desirable to have funds for xeroxing such manuscript materials in the hands of private citizens not willing to part with them. We assume that \$10.00 per library would help defray this cost.

Coordinator. A coordinator is vital to the success of this project. Someone should be available to advise participating libraries, coordinate their efforts and, to keep a master list of all interviews conducted. The

coordinator, knowledgeable in the collecting of historical materials, could help libraries learn what materials would be valuable, how to identify, classify and how to store this material.

Copies & tapes. Since tapes in a local library collection could be lost or destroyed, we would like funds for security copies of desirable tapes. These security copies would be deposited in the Western Michigan University Archives history collection.

The Kalamazoo Area Library System could establish a library history project, retain ownership of the tape recorders, and oversee the training of volunteers.

Each library would meet the needs of its own community, but Parchment can serve as an example. Our library is eleven years old, moving into improved facilities in May of this year. Due to the newness of the library, we have been unable to collect the history of Parchment in the scope in which it should have been collected over the years. There are two areas of local history which could be captured by oral interviews with the people who lived in Parchment during that particular period.

1. Parchment is a community which grew from the beginning of the Kalamazoo equitable Parchment Company in 1909. This was a company town, established primarily by the founder of the KVP Company, Jacob Kindleberger. The community became a city in 1938 and remained under the sponsorship of the KVP company until after the death of Mr. Kindleberger in 1947. The community experienced many problems during this time of changing from a dependent community to an independent city. Further changes were experienced when the KVP company merged with the Sutherland Paper Company, later sold to the Brown Company, a subsidiary of Gulf and Western.

Many legends are told about Jacob Kindleberger. One very important part of the history of Parchment is the treatment of the families living here during the Depression. The Parchment News, a newspaper which was published here from 1928 to 1952, relates some of Mr. Kindleberger's efforts, but there is no record of the feelings of the people who had to accept these projects and ideas.

2. Another controversial subject is the fight against annexation by the outlying communities. The Kalamazoo Gazette has stated the viewpoint of the residents of the city of Kalamazoo. However, I feel it would be important to find out the attitudes, reasons and emotional reactions of those who favored or opposed this change. The residents of Parchment are in a particularly good position to comment on this.

A project of oral history could reveal much of this. Since Parchment a rather small community, the interview conducted between friends or known acquaintances will, perhaps, reveal more of the true feelings and history of the community.

#### BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The benefits to each library and the county would be felt in several ways.

1. Recovering local history. The last Kalamazoo County history was published in 1927, which leaves forty-seven years of history untold. While Willis Dunbar published Kalamazoo and How it Grew in 1959, he was interested chiefly in the city of Kalamazoo and not Kalamazoo County. An oral history project, conducted by the Kalamazoo Area Library System, would recover much of the county's history of the last half century.

2. Taking library services to the community. This would give us the opportunity to go beyond the walls of the library to recapture local history. The involvement of the community in such a project would allow a greater number of people to participate in the observance of this Bicentennial.

3. Benefit to individual being interviewed. Many people feel they are not important; in fact the comment from some who have not been community leaders say "I have nothing important to offer". However, in the tapes I made during the pilot project, I found people willing to talk about their own experiences. They found themselves playing an important role in the community as their experiences became "oral history". Volunteers working in a local nursing home have found oral history interviews could be therapeutic to people who have very little to do but remember.

4. Benefits to future generations. At an age when everything is being written down, it seems that no one is bothering to write local history. We don't record people's recollections that will soon disappear, and future generations will not have the benefit of our experiences.

5. Collecting materials for library. We have computerized records which have been considered important. One of the benefits to the library collection is the people interviewed oftentimes have manuscript materials which are a valuable part of the history record, and an interview can be a means by which such material can find its way into the library collection.

6. Use of history material by patrons. The participating libraries would involve community residents in this oral history project and make

the tapes available to them. This would provide a greater opportunity for many people to participate in the observance of this Bicentennial.

Such a project would allow many local residents the opportunity to consider the way in which the American values we will be observing in this Bicentennial have been reflected in the history of their local community.

COST BREAKDOWN

January 1, 1975 - December 31, 1975

Each library:

2 tape recorders per library (Sony 110-A or comparable)	\$130	\$ 260.00
50 60-minute cassette tapes (\$1.00 per tape)		50.00
Travel expenses for conducting interviews (15¢ per mile)		75.00
Fund for xerexing related material (5¢ per sheet)		<u>10.00</u>
		395.00

15 libraries 15

5,925.00

In-service training classes		600.00
Tapes for copies to be submitted to Archives		200.00
Coordinator		<u>200.00</u>
		7,625.00

This program would have a very heavy starting cost in materials and training. A second year project, however, would be much more modest.

January 1, 1976 - December 31, 1976

Each library:

50 60-minute+cassette tapes (\$1.00 per tape)		50.00
Travel expenses for conducting interviews (15¢ per mile)		75.00
Funds for xerexing related material (5¢ per sheet)		<u>15.00</u>
		140.00

15 libraries 15

2,100.00

Tapes for copies to be submitted to Archives		200.00
Coordinator		<u>200.00</u>
		3,200.00
Total request		\$10,825.00

THE DATA BANK FOR  
THE HERITAGE COLLECTION OF LIVING HISTORY  
DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT

I (We) own and desire to give to Portage Public Library Board of Trustees for its use as hereinbelow set forth the following described property:

Description of Property:

Recording tape and/or pictorial reproduction, if any, resulting from an interview conducted on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) as part of the HERITAGE COLLECTION OF LIVING HISTORY.

Property Rights:

Now, therefore, I (We) do hereby irrevocably convey and transfer to Portage Public Library Board of Trustees for the use in THE HERITAGE COLLECTION OF LIVING HISTORY the above described property subject to no conditions or restrictions whatsoever except as may be related to access.

Literary Rights:

I (We) hereby dedicate such literary rights to the above Donee as I (We) may possess in these tape recordings.

Access:

The tape recordings shall be available for research to qualified scholars approved by the City Librarian.

In full accord with the provisions of this Deed of Gift, I (we) hereunto set my (our) hand(s).

Subject to the following restrictions:  
 None

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview conducted by \_\_\_\_\_

Portage Public Library Board of Trustees, by its duly authorized agent, the City Librarian, hereby accepts the above described gift.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Librarian

THE HERITAGE COLLECTION

DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT

I (We) own and desire to give to Portage Public Library Board of Trustees for its use as hereinbelow set forth the following described property:

Description of Property: Documents ( ) Letters ( ) Diaries ( ) Other ( )

Property Rights:

Now, therefore, I (we) do hereby irrevocably convey and transfer to PORTAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES for the use in THE HERITAGE COLLECTION the above described property subject to no conditions or restrictions whatsoever except as may be related to access.

Literary Rights:

I (We) hereby dedicate such literary rights to the above Donee as I (we) may possess in these tape recordings. Copies of the gift will be deposited with Western Michigan University's Regional History Collections.

Access:

The gift shall be available for research to qualified scholars approved by the City Librarian.

In full accord with the provisions of this Deed of Gift, I (we) hereunto set my (our) hand(s).

Subject to the following restrictions:

( ) None

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dated:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Portage Public Library Board of Trustees, by its duly authorized agent, the City Librarian, hereby accepts the above described gift.

Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Librarian  
\_\_\_\_\_

INSIGHTS

THE DATA BANK FOR LIVING HISTORY

DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT

I (We) own and desire to give to WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES for its use as hereinbelow set forth the following described property:

Description of Property:

Recording tape and pictorial reproduction, if any, resulting from an interview conducted on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) as part of INSIGHTS, The Data Bank for Living History.

Property Rights:

Now, therefore, I (We) do hereby irrevocably convey and transfer to WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES for the use of its office of Archives and Regional History Collections (Insights - The Data Bank for Living History) the above described property subject to no conditions or restrictions whatsoever except as may be related to access.

Literary Rights:

I (We) hereby dedicate such literary rights to the above Donee as I (We) may possess in these tape recordings.

Access:

The tape recordings shall be available for research to qualified scholars approved by said Donee.

In full accord with the provisions of this Deed of Gift, I (We) hereunto set my (our) hand(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor

Dated:

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, by its duly authorized agent, hereby accepts the above described gift.

Dated:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Interviewer)



# Michigan American Revolution Bicentennial Commission

T.M.L. Building - Suite 7, 6425 S. Pennsylvania Ave. Lansing, MI 48913  
(517) 373-1976

February 11, 1975

Mrs. Veva Abrahamsen  
Librarian  
Parchment Community Library  
Parchment, MI 49004

Dear Mrs. Abrahamsen:

The application for endorsement and funding for the Parchment Library Oral History Project has been reviewed by both the Heritage and Executive Committees and was then considered at the most recent meeting of the full Michigan Bicentennial Commission.

I am pleased to inform you that the Commission voted unanimously to endorse this project and to provide initial funding in the amount of \$2,500.00. The Commission has also indicated the possibility of additional financial support based upon a review of the program as it develops.

I should also like to indicate that several Commission members expressed concern that once this material has been gathered, it might have limited utilization in the community. Consequently, additional financial participation is directly related to the development of a program for utilizing this tape recorded material.

I should like to extend my personal congratulations to you and to the others involved in this project. Endorsement and financial participation give tangible proof of the Bicentennial Commission's support for this kind of local effort.

Best regards,

*Howard F. Lancour*

Howard F. Lancour  
Executive Director

Lt. Gov. James H. Brickley  
*Chairman*

Howard F. Lancour  
*Executive Director*

Richard H. Austin · William H. Boutell · Gordon R. Bryant · Sen. Gilbert Bursley · Margo R. Carlin  
Rep. James Defebaugh · Lawrence P. Doss · Carol L. Evans · A. Gene Gazlay · Frank S. Hedge · Richard K. Helmbrecht  
John H. Hutchens · Dr. John X. Jamrich · Russell Kirk · Olga M. Madar · Sen. Patrick McCollough · Hudson Mead  
Jack B. Millard · Mildred A. Pastor · Dr. John Porter · Robert F. Reynolds · Robert H. Sisson · Elton R. Smith  
Charles J. Snell · Frank B. Stallings · Dorothy L. Walkmeyer · Dolores Wharton · John Woodford

# WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

and

INSIGHTS: THE DATA BANK FOR LIVING HISTORY

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN  
49001

REC'D 4-27-75

October 17, 1975

Ms. Veva Abrahamsen  
Parchment Public Library  
204 Island  
Parchment, Michigan

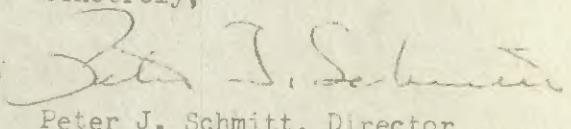
Dear Veva:

The INSIGHTS workshop in oral history is now completed. John Houdek and I have been encouraged by the enthusiasm and the insightful comments of the participants. I have particularly benefitted by our conversations over the past several weeks. We feel that we have:

- a. prepared our participants to deal with the problems of organization
- b. given them an understanding of interview techniques
- c. prepared them to train additional volunteers on their own
- d. given adequate introduction to the problems of processing, preservation and use of oral history materials
- e. established procedures through which John and I may counsel participants and critique their work on an individual basis over the coming months.

I would like to request reimbursement in the amount of \$600 to cover the cost of the workshop as we had originally projected it.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Schmitt, Director